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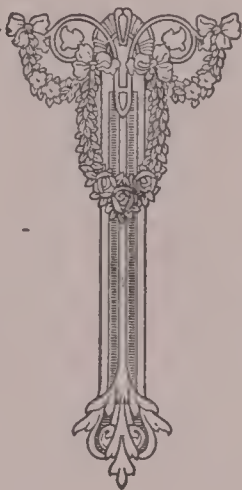
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STORIES FROM MAÑANA LAND

BY
MAY CARR HANLEY



1922

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIFORNIA

KANSAS CITY, MO.

PORTLAND, ORE.

ST. PAUL, MINN.

BROOKFIELD, ILL.

CRISTOBAL, C. Z.

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FEB 17 1922

no 1

To the three children whose loving
interest inspired these little
stories, and to all boys
and girls who love
the great wide
world

Foreword

Mexico is sometimes called our "sister republic," and so I trust that the boys and girls who read this book will remember that the Mexican boys and girls are their brothers and sisters.

The six years that I spent among your little dark-skinned neighbors taught me to love them and to love their land. I only wish that each of you could see them in their homes under the palms and by the river, and become acquainted with their many strange pets.

But, as few of you can do so, I have told you of some of the pets my children had, and of the many strange sights we saw.

Many of the children of Mexico have never heard the good news that Jesus is coming soon. If the stories I have told you awaken a desire in your hearts to study about other lands, and to devote your lives to spreading the glad gospel tidings, I shall be very happy.

M. C. H.

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Street Scene in the Land of Mañana

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In the Land of Mañana

“What was he saying, mother?” questioned Earl.

“I do not know,” answered his mother; “all that I can remember is *Mañana, mañana* (pronounced ma-nya’na). I was trying to get him to bring our trunks from the station.”

“But what does *mañana* mean?” continued the questioner.

“We shall have to go back to the sanitarium and ask,” said mother helplessly.

Mother Wesley and her three children had come to Guadalajara, in the sunny land of Mexico, to be with Grandfather and Grandmother Mack at the beautiful sanitarium there.

“Are the people really talking?” asked Bernice doubtfully. “Look at that little baby listening to its mother, and—why, it is talking, too!” she exclaimed.

“Of course,” laughed mother; “they are talking Spanish, and they understand it just the same as you understand English.”

“I believe that dog understands it, too!” said Bernice excitedly.

"Certainly he does," mother asserted with a smile; "and we must begin to study, so we too can understand it."

"Grandmother, what does *mañana* mean?" were Earl's first words when they reached the sanitarium.

"Oh, you have found out already that you are in 'the Land of Mañana,'" laughed grandmother. "It means to-morrow. No one is in a hurry here. What you want them to do, they will always promise to do to-morrow; and you know that to-morrow never comes. So Mexico is called 'the Land of Mañana.'"

"You will find everything very strange here," explained grandmother. "The people, their homes, the manners and customs, are so different from those in the land from which you came. Most of the people are, oh, so poor, and have very little to eat and wear. It is hard to help them; for some of them, instead of buying food or clothing with the money given them, will spend it for drink or tobacco. Even food or clothing, when given them, is oftentimes pawned."

"Your grandfather and I took a walk one afternoon to the home of one of our workmen. He had told us that his child was sick, and I

had promised to go and see it. We walked through the pastures, with beautiful green fields stretching back to the woods on our left, while at our right flowed the quiet river.

"The house was in a clump of bamboo, surrounded by bananas and other tropical fruit. It was made of long poles lashed together with vines. The roof was thatched. Some houses have grass roofs, and others have palm-leaf roofs. There is no need of win-



Making Tortillas — A Thatched House in the Background

dows, for plenty of light comes through the cracks between the bamboo.

“We found the one little room very clean. On one side of it, there were two rude beds made of mats; while on the other side, the mother was grinding corn to make tortillas. Tortillas are a sort of pancake usually made of corn meal. These she bakes over the open fire burning in one corner of the room.

“The two-year-old sick baby was sitting on the earth floor, eating black beans and tortillas. Four half-clad little brothers were enjoying the same fare. We gave the mother the milk we had brought for the child, and talked with her about its care. We couldn’t help wondering where they all stayed when it rained, for there were seven persons who lived in this one little room.

“Our Saviour died for these poor, ignorant people, as well as for us; and they must know it before He comes. Few can read or write; but in some way, they must be told of the love of Jesus for them.”

Earl’s eyes were big when grandmother finished her story. Down in his heart, he was glad that he was in “the Land of Mañana”; and he determined to be a true missionary.

On the King's Highway

Soon after Mrs. Wesley and her children, Earl, Bernice, and Baby Lucita, reached Mexico, grandfather and grandmother moved to a ranch in the state of Vera Cruz. Earl and Bernice were sent to a kindergarten, while mother taught a little Mexican girl, and took Lucita along. All went well until mother became very sick, and it was decided that she must go away to a hospital. And what about the children?—They must go to the country to stay with their grandparents.

There was so much to see, and there were so many paths to explore, on the ranch, that they were not lonely for mother in the daytime; but, oh, the bedtime! Who could tell stories and talk to little boys and girls about living right, and make them see all the mistakes of the day, just like mother?

Away up in New Orleans, the sick mother lay in the hospital, thinking, always thinking, of her children so far away, and wondering if she would ever see them again.

How precious to her were those dear letters Bernice wrote! “Don’t worry about Lucita, mamma, for I am her little mother now.

I wash her, comb her hair, and dress her, and I am teaching her to read. She can spell l-i-t-t-l-e so cute! When are you coming home?"

Earl's letters were full of farm talk—of the cows and the calves, the chickens and the pet deer. "Grandpa says if I save up money enough, I may buy a calf for my very own. I have been selling milk to Mr. Towne, and have some saved now. When are you coming home? We miss you."

Again and again were those dear words read—"We miss you." "No one knows how I miss you, my children," she thought. "I will write you often, but I shall do my best to get well and be with you again very soon, dear ones."

And so the weary months dragged by until mother did get well. With what joy she sent the letter telling her dear ones that she would soon be on the steamer bound once more for "the Land of Mañana"!

A Glad Welcome

"Mother is coming home!" said Earl, in his grave, quiet way.

"Yes," said grandmother; and she read the letter again.

"Oh, mother is coming home!" said happy Bernice, softly.

"Mother is coming home!" sang little Lucita.

"We must plan to have a comfortable room for her," said grandfather. "She will be weak, for she has been ill so long."

How happy the three children were! Their mother had been in a hospital far away, for six months; and that is a long time to be without a mother. Of course, they were tenderly cared for by their grandmother and grandfather; but they had missed their mother.

"Coming home at last! Grandmother, do you think the steamer will come in the night? 'Cause if it does, I can't go to bed, for I am so hungry to see my mother," said Bernice earnestly.

"No, dear," reassured grandmother; "you may sleep to-night, for those big boats do not come into the harbor at night. So trot off to

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dreamland. I have a little surprise for you to-morrow."

Early in the morning, Earl, Bernice, Lucita, and grandmother found themselves in a boat on their way to the bar.

"Will my mother get off at the jetty?" asked Lucita.

"No; but we are going to watch the boat enter the river, and we'll wave at mother. She will not be looking for us, but I think she will recognize the crowd. Don't you?" And grandmother looked proudly at her little family.

"We are lots bigger, aren't we, grandma?" said little Lucita.

But already they were landing, and grandmother led the way to the lighthouse, and was greeted by the keeper: "*Buenos días, señora. So the chiquitos have come?*"

"Yes, Juan." Then, turning to the children with a laugh at their puzzled expressions, she explained: "This is my surprise, children. You have always wanted to go up in the lighthouse, and now we are going to climb the stairs."

Juan did not give them time to be surprised very long, but picked up Lucita and

led the way upstairs. Around and around the sides of the tall building they went. Occasionally there was a landing, with a window; and they would sit down and rest. Toiling and puffing for breath, up and up they climbed—would they never reach the top?

At last, they could see light at the top. The keeper helped them through an opening, and—there they were, on the top of the lighthouse, high in the air. A round platform with a railing gave them a small space on which they might move about and look over the land in all directions.

“Oh, I feel as if I were on the tower of Babel, trying to climb into heaven!” panted Bernice.

They watched Juan clean the huge revolving lamp, and he explained how it turned by machinery. “Each lighthouse has a little different light, or it turns differently,” he explained. “The seamen know all these lights, and can tell at once where they are.”

“Just as the light keeps them from danger, so God’s light saves us,” added grandmother softly.

“The train is returning to town,” said grandmother after a moment.

"Where? I don't see any train," said Earl, stretching his head as far over the rail as he could.

"Right at our feet, away down," said grandmother, pointing out the line of cars moving below them. "It looks about as large as your toy train; and those people running—how tiny they are!"

"They look like clothespins to me. How can they have shrunk so?" questioned Bernice.

"Juan, may we look through your field glasses?" they asked. Then he handed each one the glasses and let each take a long look. "*Qué ves, Lucita?*" he asked, as Lucita pointed them toward the sea.

"What do I see? Why, nothing but water—water this way, and over there I see Tampico and the river and wharves and—" Juan gently swung her head toward the sea again, and steadied the glasses. "It is a boat coming in!" she exclaimed excitedly.

"Yes; it is very likely to be the Norheim," suggested Juan.

"Let us hurry down. Mother is coming," they shouted in a breath.

"No hurry, for that boat is an hour's travel away still," reassured Juan. But in spite of

all, they could hardly wait to reach the ground.

The excitement of the children knew no bounds as they raced up and down the wet, smooth sand, and watched the Norheim steam closer and closer, splitting the blue water, and leaving a broad swath of foam in its track.

Three children waved excitedly from the jetty, and a lonely woman on board answered them.

Then the children took the train back to Tampico, and were waiting on the wharf when the steamer whistled. Mother is home again, and their hearts are filled with gladness..



Chewing Gum

“Do you know where gum comes from?” asked mother of Earl, one day as she lay on the couch in the sitting room. “It has such an interesting journey before it is ready to keep so many mouths busy!”

Earl was always ready for a story; and so, seating himself close to the invalid, he begged, “Please tell me.”

“The kind of gum that is mostly used,” began mother, “is the sap of a tree. Forests of these trees are found all around here and even in Central America. This tree is a beautiful evergreen, with bright, glossy leaves, and it bears a delicious fruit.

“The work of gathering the chicle, as the sap is called, is done by the natives. Thousands of them come together in the forests, build camps, tap the trees, and then gather the sap.

“The way in which they get the sap from the trees is curious. A native fastens one end of a rope securely around his body, and the other end he throws around the tree. Grasping this rope in his hands, he walks right up the tree.

“Then, with his long knife, which he always carries in his belt, he cuts into the tree as shown in this picture. In the last cut, he fastens a large leaf, which serves as a trough. The sap runs freely from one cut into another, and on into a large leaf or gourd that has been placed at the bottom of the tree.

“In a few hours, the sap has all run out. The amount depends upon the size and age of the tree.

“The milky sap is then placed over the fire in large kettles and boiled until it hardens. Then it is taken from the fire, and the cakes of pure, clean gum are shipped to the United States. Here there are large factories where it is prepared for sale, by being mixed with other materials, such as pepsin.

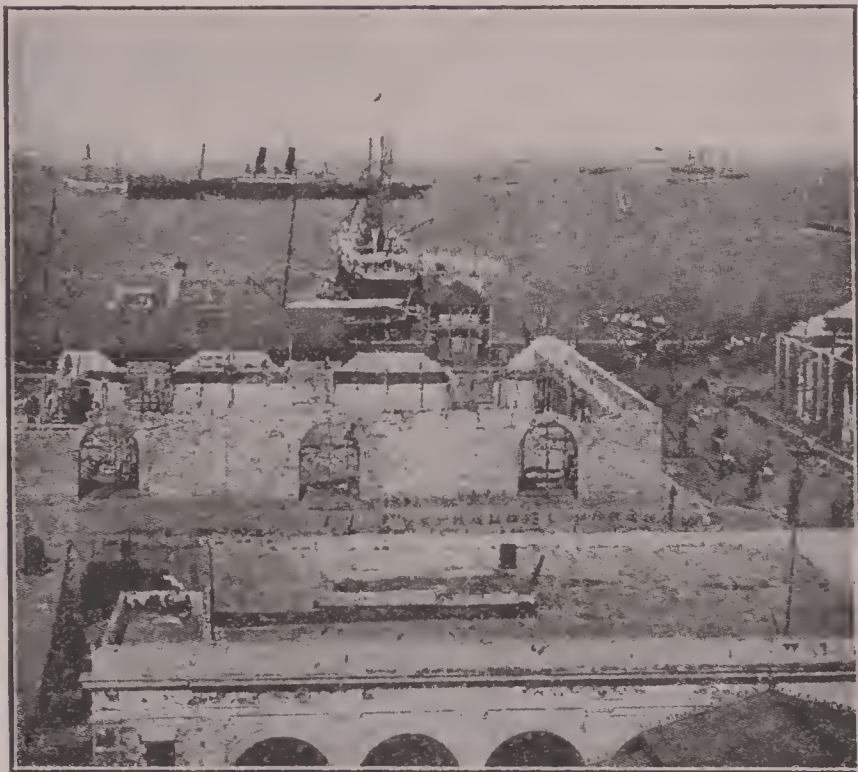
“There is a great deal of money spent for chewing gum in the United States, more than is spent for some of the things people really need.

“We all know, too, that chewing causes the saliva to flow more quickly. So much saliva is not needed except at mealtime, when it is mixed with our food. That is why chewing



gum a great deal is not a good thing for boys and girls.

“And I hope my little boy would rather spend his nickels to send the gospel to the children of Mexico than to waste it on gum,” said mother as she finished the story.



Harbor at Vera Cruz

The Mango

What interested the children and Mamma Wesley most were the many trees that they had to get acquainted with in their new home.

“Oh, grandfather, what is that tall tree with the beautiful, glistening leaves and yellow fruit?” said one of the children.

“Why, that is the tree from which we get our delicious mangoes,” replied grandfather.

“Now, children, while you sit down and eat these mangoes, I will tell you something about how they grow,” said grandfather.

“The fruit is kidney-shaped, and is of a bright yellow color, specked with brown. It tastes very much like a cling peach, and the seed is covered with tiny strings that look like cotton.

“Suppose we planted this seed. In a short time, the tiny leaves would appear; and by the third year, we should have a tall, slim tree bearing fruit. These trees that you see here are wild. They must be very old, judging from their size.”

“It does not seem possible that this tree ever was slim. See! I cannot reach nearly around it,” said brother as he stretched his arms about the large trunk.

“Bring the tapeline and let us measure it,” suggested grandfather. “Ah, it is larger than I thought—nine feet around, and that would be nearly three feet through.”

“The mango tree stays green all the year around,” he continued. “Isn’t it a beautiful sight, with its golden fruit hanging so thickly among the dark green leaves? Surely it is one that should cause us to pause and think of the glory and power of God.”

“Do mangoes grow in the United States?” asked sister.

“In a few small sections only, as frost would kill them. But come, the sun has set; let us return to the house, and to-morrow we will go to see a rubber grove.”



A Street Scene in Mexico

A Visit to a Rubber Plantation

The children were all up bright and early, ready for the promised visit to a rubber plantation. The morning was clear and beautiful, and the birds were merrily singing praises to their loving Creator.

It was not far to go, as the rubber trees were on a neighbor's place. No doubt it seems strange to you to think of going to a neighbor's in a rowboat; but that was the most convenient way, because all the houses were on the bank of the river.

As they were skimming along over the smooth surface of the water, grandfather asked, "Now, children, from what do most trees grow?"

"From seed."

"Yes; then let us first see how the seed of the rubber is planted. The ground is plowed, and the seed is planted in rows like fruit tree seeds, and cultivated until large enough to transplant. Then the young trees are set out like any other orchard."

"Well," said Lucita, "I would like to see where the rubbers grow."

“Rubbers! Why, all of these little trees on the bank of the river are rubber trees,” answered grandfather with a smile.

“Oh, I mean the kind we wear on our feet when it is muddy,” she persisted.



“It is a big step, little girl, from these trees to the rubber shoes you wear,” explained grandfather; “but the shoes are made of rubber obtained from this same kind of trees.”

“Tell us how they get rubber from trees. Does it come from the leaves, or from the fruit? Or is it the bark that is so stretchy?” asked Earl.

“No,” answered grandfather; “the trees are slashed with a knife, or machete, much the same as the zapote tree is cut for the sap from which chewing gum is made. The sap runs into kettles. Then a large fire is made, and a big paddle is dipped into the sap and held over the smoke. The sap quickly hardens, and again the paddle is dipped into the liquid and held over the fire. This is done until there is a big lump of rubber on the paddle. This rubber is shipped to the factories, where it is made into rubber goods. Perhaps other ways are used in some places, for this seems very slow and tedious. The work is all done by Indians, who go in bands from one plantation to another and camp out.”

The children soon moored their boat at the landing, and walked up the shady path to the rows of bearing trees.

“What large leaves! Each one is longer than I am tall,” said Earl.

“You see this is really a limb with large leaves attached in pairs the length of it,” ex-



Trees are slashed with a knife, much the same
as the zapote tree is cut for sap from which
chewing gum is made.

plained grandfather. "Let us pick off a piece of sap that has dried on the bark. Isn't that stretchy?" He handed a little to each child.

"Generally the trees are not tapped until about six years old," he said; "and each should give at least one pound of rubber a year for twenty-five or thirty years. Some give much more. The rubber tree grows wild. Some measure seven feet around."

Grandfather and his little charges walked through the groves of spreading trees, and through the nursery of tiny plants, and beyond into the wild forest draped with bright running vines, until they were tired and were glad to return home. Earl expressed what was in the minds of all as he said reverently, "Just think how many wonderful things God has provided for us!"



The Birthday Orchids

"Such a beautiful, sunny day this is!" called grandfather from the foot of the stairs. "All the birdies are singing their praises to God. Jump up, children!"

Now wouldn't you get up quickly and happily if you were awakened like that? Of course you would; and so did Earl and Bernice and even little Lucita.

"Come here, dear," said grandfather to Bernice. "I must give you a birthday kiss."

"Why, this is my birthday!" exclaimed the happy girl.

Then there was a merry scramble to give her eight birthdays and "one to grow on."

"We shall have your birthday dinner in the arbor to-day," said grandmother. "Won't that be a treat?"

"Yes, indeed! You must let us set the table, too. We'd love to do it, and we can save you and mother so many steps," replied Bernice happily, for she never missed a chance of being helpful.

"I must ride up in the woods this afternoon, to see about the fences. I wonder if a good

little girl eight years old would like to go with me," said grandfather.

"Oh, grandfather, do you really mean me? I have always wanted to go back there in the woods. But doesn't brother want to go?"

"No doubt he does. He always likes to go. I have invited you, though, this time," insisted grandfather, with a twinkle in his eyes.

"Oh, I am so glad! I'll see the wild fruits and those gay flowers. I'll bring you some, too, wee sister," said she, as she noticed the sober face of her sister. Then she added, "Maybe you want to go; do you?"

"Of course I want to go. Grandfather takes me lots of times; and of course I can hold on, too," bragged Lucita.



Humboldt's Cypress, the Largest Tree in Mexico

"All right, you go. You can bring me some flowers," replied the unselfish little girl. Grandfather and grandmother and mother exchanged glances.

"It is always that way. She gives up her pleasure to others every time," said mother to her mother in a low tone; but she looked pleased, nevertheless. Then to Bernice she added, "No, no, this is your birthday treat, dear, and you must go with grandfather."

"Yes; we must be off, too, if we get back out of the woods before dark. I'll saddle up Flora, and you may have Jess to ride."

It wasn't long until both horses were ready and Bernice was scrambling to Jess's back. Then away they went toward the woods and the big pasture; and such a jolly time as they had!

When they returned in the evening, Bernice had much to tell the dear stay-at-homes. She told them about the birds and the wild fruit and the flowers that she had seen. She brought back some of the flowers with her. She carried one bunch very carefully in her hand, and handed it to mother before she slipped down from old Jess.

"They are orchids," she explained, "and grandfather says they are parasites."

"What's that?" asked brother.

"A parasite is anything that lives upon another," answered grandfather. "There are persons that do not want to work, but expect the world to give them a living. They are parasites. There are animal parasites, too, those which live upon other animals. The plant of this beautiful flower lives upon a tree. The mistletoe also is a parasite, and it does great harm by stealing the nourishment from the tree. We do not want to be parasites, do we, children?" he asked. "We want to be unselfish and work for others. If we lean upon others for our happiness, we won't find it. Happiness in this life comes from making others happy. Don't you think so?"

And they all agreed with grandfather.



Adobe houses are made from
mud bricks.

Fiber Plants of Mexico

"Earl, bring me a needle and thread to sew up this sack," called grandfather.

"All right!" answered Earl, as he ran toward the house.

"Wait! There is one already threaded under the aguacate tree."

Several pairs of bright eyes searched, but no needle and thread could they see. Grandfather laughed, and went to a plant like the one in the picture; and catching hold of the large thorn at the point of a leaf, he gave it a little twist to loosen it. Then he pulled out the thorn, with a long, strong string attached, and with these he proceeded to sew up the sack.

"This plant is one of the most wonderful of the tropics," said grandfather. "Come, let us sit on this mat in the shade, and I will tell you about this great fiber plant."

"There are several varieties, as the zapupe, sisal, and henequen. This fiber is used to make rope, twine, sacks, hand bags, brushes, and all kinds of cordage, from the very finest threads to the coarsest ropes. The mat you are sitting upon is made of zapupe fiber."



Tree on which needles grow already threaded.

“How do they prepare these thick, fleshy leaves to make fine thread and fibers? I can easily see how they can use cotton or wool in making clothing, but this plant is so juicy,” said Bernice.

“That is quite a story,” began grandfather. “The leaves are cut about every three months. The sharp thorns are cut off; and then the leaves are placed in bundles of fifty and carried to the cleaning shed. The cleaning of the leaves is a simple operation. They are run through a machine shredder, which will handle about twenty thousand of them an hour with the help of three men. The fiber is then allowed to dry thoroughly in the sun, after which it is ready for shipment. By machinery, each fiber is divided into one hundred parts, or threads, bringing out all of its beautiful softness. The fabric made of it resembles silk, but is far more durable, being wiry and strong.”

“How are these fiber plants propagated?” asked mother; “and can we set out some?”

“Each year, while the plant is bearing leaves, six or seven sprouts, or suckers, spring from the root; and these can be cut and set out between the rows.

“Another interesting thing about this plant is the sprouting of a long stem, often twenty feet high. This stem bears a large cluster, yielding from one thousand to two thousand five hundred complete little plants, which drop off and are also set out. You may know that the plant has almost finished its life work when this happens, for it soon dies. But it has yielded enough little plants to plant a large field. The life of a fiber plant is about fifteen years. The Indians use the fiber in making ropes, lariats, and fish nets. Millions of dollars are earned yearly by the sale of fiber plants.”



Clumsy two-wheeled carts drawn by slow-going oxen are used.

The Collole Palm

At dinner one day, grandmother was talking about the many beautiful flowers to be found in Mexico, and of how easy it was to study botany here, because the plants and the blossoms are so large, and the parts are easily seen and examined.

“Have you observed the blossom on the palm by the mango trees, the one with the fan-shaped leaves?” asked grandfather.

“Yes,” answered the children. “It has so many thorns, we could not get very close; but we noticed how sweet it smelled.”

After dinner, the children saw grandfather take down his machete, a huge knife that all Mexicans carry, and go down the path toward the palms. Presently he returned with a palm blossom. “Oh, oh! What a beauty! How lovely!” they chorused.

It was three feet long, and the main stem was thickly studded with brown thorns at the base. Below hung at least one hundred and fifty long spikes from six to ten inches in length, of a bright yellow color.

When they came to look at it closely, they found that each of these spikelike flowers

was really many, many tiny flowers, each one perfect in itself.

From some of the lower ones, the petals had dropped off, and only the seed boxes remained.

"This is the fruit or nut of the palm that the natives call *collole* (co-yo'la)," explained grandfather. "They grow about the size of a walnut, and are exactly like tiny coconuts, with the outer fibrous husk and the inside hard shell. The meat tastes like the coconut, too, and is quite oily. In some parts of the republic, one can buy them shelled, twelve nuts for a cent, Mexican money; and the natives are very fond of them, though they will not use them for cooking purposes, because they always use lard. We grind them in the nut mill and use them for oil, throwing away the woody pulp."

"Let us put the blossom in the hall," suggested mother. "It is a real ornament, and will make the whole house fragrant."

"But we haven't a vase large enough to hold it," exclaimed the puzzled Lucita.

"No, indeed!" agreed grandfather; "but we can hang it up by a stout cord." And so the blossom still hung there the next day,

when the children heard a queer noise outside the house.

“What is that noise?” asked mother. It didn’t take long for the youngsters to hurry into the corridor to see what was causing it. Grandfather and his workmen had been out in the fields and had brought in a large load of straight palm leaves. The pony was puffing and panting, for it had dragged them in by a rope attached to the saddle horn.

“Oh, what a huge pile of leaves! What are you going to do with them, grandfather?” asked Bernice.

“I am going to reroof the storeroom with them. You see, all of them are over eighteen feet long, and will shed water well. But here is a dainty bud that I brought in for you to study.”

“Dainty!” echoed the children, as grandfather untied from the saddle horn the great bud of the collole palm.



The Bud of the
Collole Palm

It was four feet long, and eighteen inches in circumference in the middle, tapering to a point at each end. It was smooth and shiny, and of a dark green color.

“Do let us see what is inside of it,” begged Lucita; but when she attempted to lift it, she exclaimed, “Oh, how heavy!”

“Indeed, it is heavy; it weighs about one hundred pounds,” said grandfather. Then he took the machete and opened the hard covering, or case.

“See, there is the blossom just as I showed you yesterday, only this one has not been exposed to the air and sunlight, and so is white yet. If left on the tree, a bud opens underneath and spreads out over the blossom (which is really made of baby *collole* nuts), to protect it.”

“May I have the blossom’s cradle for my dolly’s bed?” asked Bernice.

“What a fine cradle that will make for Miss Rosa! But I think it is large enough to hold half a dozen dollies,” laughed mother.



One of the churches of Mexico, some of
which are very old.

El Santo Niño

"I wish you could have heard the Mexicans, Earl, when they were making so much noise," said Bernice.

"When?" asked Earl.

"Oh, yesterday while you were out in the woods with grandfather. Tell him about it, grandmother," exclaimed Bernice.

Then grandmother explained: "Yesterday we heard some music; and looking out on the river, we saw the procession of the Santo Niño. Two large cedar canoes were tied together, and there was a man in the bow and one in the stern of each boat, paddling.

"One canoe was filled with men playing several kinds of musical instruments, and it also carried one man who was loading and firing a gun.

"The other canoe was filled to overflowing with women, and each woman had a bright-colored paper flag flying in the breeze. In the center of this boat, seated in a small chair, was a large doll dressed in pink and wearing a little straw hat.

"You see," she continued, "sometimes, when natives are sick or in trouble, they

promise that if they recover or are delivered from their affliction, they will bring el Santo Niño, or 'the Holy Child,' to their house, and hold services.

"Well, they took this doll, or image, to the house of one of the workmen on a neighboring ranch. Then they fired the gun again and again, which is an invitation for all to gather to the feast; and before long, there was a large crowd.

"An altar was set up, with the image upon it, and candles were burned in front of it. Some of the people knelt in front of the altar, and gave thanks to the child for preserving their lives; and they all dropped money in a basket fastened to the outstretched arms of the image. Others sat in the doorway gambling, while outside the people danced and passed around strong drinks. These gatherings often end in a fight.

"To-day the same crowd carried the doll back to the place where it is kept—a few miles below us on the river.

"These poor people do not seem to know why they worship these images; and when questioned about it, they generally shrug their shoulders and say, 'We do not know; it is the

custom.' There is great need for some one to tell them of the love of our Saviour; and when we see people worshiping they know not what, we remember that God has said, 'Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth,' and, 'Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.'

"We should have our minds filled with the precious truths of the Bible, and always be ready to tell others of the love of Christ."



One of the very old churches of Mexico going into decay.

El Pito Real

"Come here quickly, children!" Grandfather stepped quietly to the door and called the children in a low tone. They did not need a second bidding, but followed him out, and looked up where he was pointing to the top of a mango tree.

As Lucita caught sight of the bright feathers, she whispered, "Why, they are parrots!"

The children could not understand why grandfather had called them away from their studies to show them a flock of parrots; for in tropical Mexico, parrots are as common as crows or quails in the United States. They fly over in bands, and pull up the corn and destroy the crops. People are often awakened at dawn by their shrill "waw-waw, squeak-squak."

"Now look!" said grandfather. With a great ado, the birds flew to another tree, and the children saw them clearly this time. They were about the size of a half-grown chicken, but the most curious thing about them was their big beaks. It seemed as though the birds would surely topple forward and fall to the ground under such a weight.

“I should think those great bills would give them a headache,” said Earl. “Why, a heavy Mexican sombrero makes my head and neck tired.” A Mexican sombrero is a wide-brimmed hat with a pointed crown. Very often they are big and heavy, and so no won-



The Yellow-Throated Toucan, the Bird with
the Big Beak

der they tired Earl's head and neck. "But fancy carrying about that weight all day and sleeping with it at night!" he confided.

"There comes Juan, the hired man, and he has shot one," said grandfather. "Let us look at it carefully. What do you call it, Juan?"

"El pito real, señor."

"Oh, the royal piper, is it? Well, he is dressed up in bright colors. See, the neck is orange; up to the point of the wings, the body is black; the wings are tipped with red, and the breast is red too; the tail is black, with two orange-colored feathers running down each side; on the back, near the tail, is a splash of light orange with a red half-moon on it."

But the great beak was the most interesting part. It was six inches long and two inches wide, marked in all bright colors. This queer bird also had a very slender, long, feathery tongue.

"Grandfather, what can it use this kind of tongue for?" asked Earl.

"I think they must be made thus to draw insects out of their hiding places. What do they feed on, Juan?"

“On fruits and insects, señor. Do you wish the bill? I am going to take the bird home to eat.”

“Yes, do leave us the beak,” chorused the children.

So Juan took his knife and cut the bill off as easily as I would cut paper; and—would you believe me?—it was as light as a feather. The outer shell was no thicker than the paper I am writing on, and the whole inside was composed of a great many cells with very thin walls and wide spaces. But in spite of the way they are made, the bills are very strong, and their owners use them with a good deal of force; so the children decided not to try to capture a royal piper alive. However, Mr. Piper will never have a headache because of carrying his beak around.



A Mexican Home

Armadillo

"Call mother, girls, and come down to the river. The Towne boys are calling for us. They seem to have something to show us," called brother early one spring morning.

Off skipped the girls, while mother and Aunt Gertrude, mother's sister who had come to visit the folks on the farm, followed not far behind. When they reached the river, the long, narrow cedar canoe of the nearest neighbor was tied at the wharf, and the boys, James and John, were holding a very peculiar-looking animal by the tail.

"Pray tell, lads, what do you call your captive?" questioned mother.

"It is an armadillo."

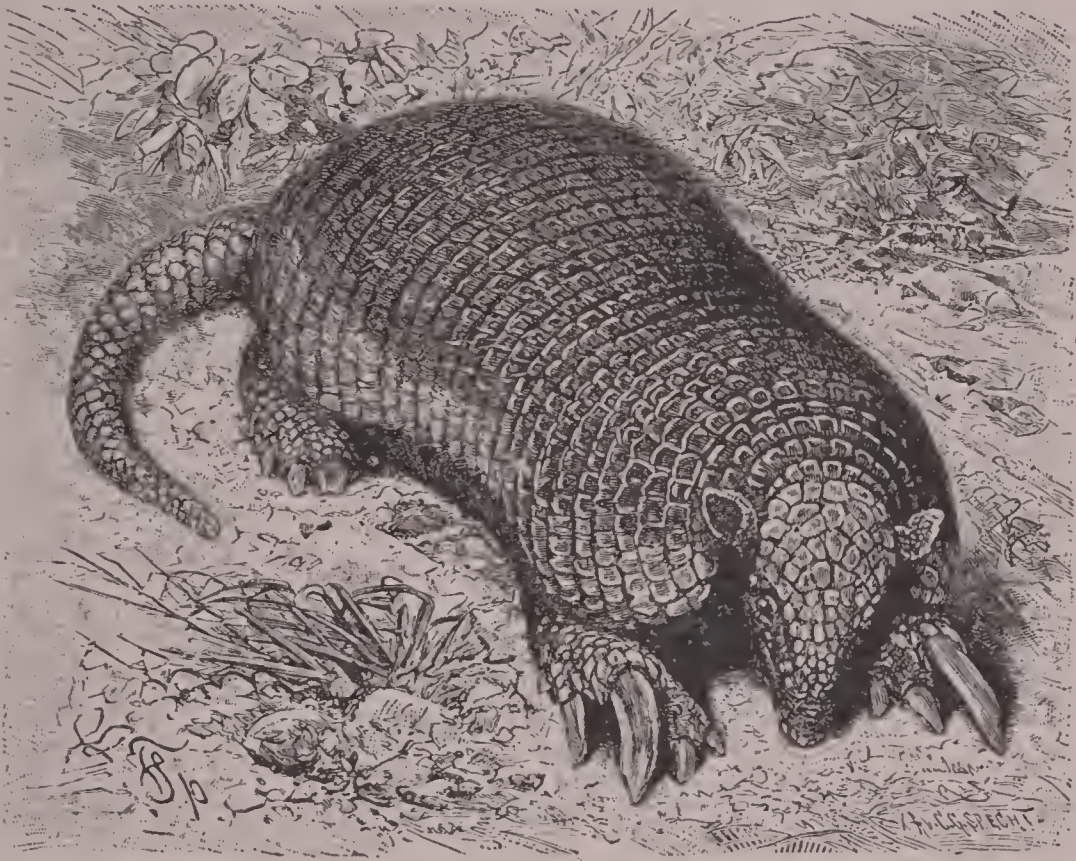
"Hold it up, James, so we can get a good view of it," replied mother, interested at once.

Catching it firmly by the tail, James swung it to the bank, making the children run to escape the splash of water, and even mother stepped back to keep from getting wet.

The creature was three feet in length, covered with a shell, a sort of armor, which is one of the most remarkable suits to be found in all the world. It is composed of tiny bone

plates all fitted closely together, yet the animal was able to bend any part of its body.

Its head looked like that of a pig, and also had a bone covering. It had a long,



The armadillo, which has a most remarkable suit, composed of tiny bone plates all fitted closely together.

straight tail, large at the body and tapering to a point, the whole length covered with the scaly shell.

“Mr. Armadillo evidently does not enjoy our company, for he is backing into his house,” laughed Aunt Gertrude.

Sure enough, there was nothing to be seen of the animal but the huge grayish shell. The head, the tail, and the feet were drawn in, and it was as quiet as an opossum.

Just then they all looked up at a passing canoe; and quick as a flash, the armadillo slid off the bank and into the water. But James was as quick as it was. He sprang into the canoe, and caught it as it swam past.

Then followed a tug of war. John ran to help his brother; and only by their united efforts were they able to pull it in again.

“How did you catch it?” asked sister.

“We were hunting in the woods, and the dogs found it,” replied James. “When we reached the place, the armadillo was rolled up in a ball, pretending to be asleep. We put it into a sack and brought it to the boat. On the river bank, we found a burrow of another one—you know they live in the ground. We dug that one out; but it was too spry for us, and it got away.”

“Do be careful, brother; that creature will bite you,” cautioned Bernice.

“You need not fear, ma’am,” said John, “for armadillos are perfectly harmless. In fact, they have no teeth in front, and their

back teeth are small and frail. They live on fruits, insects, snails, and mice. Some say they dig out ants and eat them, though I cannot be sure of that."

"What do you intend doing with your prize?" queried the children, who, after a whispering among themselves, had decided that perhaps mother might be persuaded to let them have a pet armadillo.

"I suppose we shall give it to a native. The natives eat them, and consider them a choice dainty in spite of their dirty food," answered James. "We must be going now. Let us put the armadillo back into the sack."

But this was easier said than done, as the animal refused to go back. It kicked with such powerful blows that the boys were content to let it squat in the bottom of the canoe, while one of them kept a firm hold on the tail.

A short time after, they sent grandmother the shell of the poor armadillo, nicely polished; and it now hangs on the wall of the *sala*, or sitting room, and serves as a paper rack, noticed and admired by all.

Catching Bathtubs

“Did you ever see an armadillo the size of the one in this picture, grandmother?” asked Lucita, as she pointed to a picture in grandfather’s large animal book.

“No; but they say this armadillo lived many, many years ago, perhaps before the Flood,” replied grandmother.

“The shell that you have would hardly make a suit for this creature, would it?”

“Possibly for a puppy,” laughed grandmother. “No doubt you would scarcely believe me if I should tell you about some of the large animals I have seen here in Mexico. What would you say about a turtle so large that it could not be put flat down into a wagon box?”

“A turtle? Why, I carried one in my pocket last summer! Do tell us about the big ones you have seen,” begged Lucita, interested at once.

“How you do enjoy hearing about the animals of this land! But that is the way to learn. A number of years ago my Mexican servant called me one morning, and said: ‘The men have caught a turtle. Now they’ll feel



The turtle whose shell is used for a bathtub by the natives.

repaid for their nights of hunting, for one turtle will feed them many days!

“‘Eat a turtle!’ I exclaimed.

“‘Oh, yes, they eat them! The flesh is quite as good as that of a chicken,’ she answered.

“Just to see what was causing so much excitement, the children and I went down to the lake shore, where a large canoe was coming in to the little wharf in front of our house. There we saw the turtle. We could well believe Juana’s statement then. The turtle was so large that the strength of many men was required to lift it from the boat to the wharf.

“‘Do tell us how you captured this huge creature,’ I said to the men.

“Pedro took off his large sombrero, and fanned himself as he talked, only too glad for a chance to rest after his task of paddling the canoe across the lake.

“‘At this season of the year,’ he said, ‘the turtles are laying their eggs in the warm sand on the seashore. At night, they scoop out a place in the sand, lay their eggs, cover them lightly with sand, and leave them to be

hatched by the warmth of the sun. We hide behind a bush or a pile of rocks until a turtle comes out on the sand to make its nest. When it is close, we rush out and grab the turtle by the heavy shell, and try to throw it on its back. Sometimes we fail; and then we lose our turtle, for it quickly scrambles out of our reach into the water. But if we succeed in upsetting our victim, it is helpless. A large one like this can never turn itself back, so we have it at our mercy.'

"'Pedro, I want to buy this shell,' broke in a native woman. 'Every family in this village has a nice turtle shell bathtub except me, and I want this one.'

"'It is well. You shall have it. Your bathtub will be plenty big enough.'

"We laughed as we thought of bathing in that shell, though it was surely large enough. It was as long as our bathtubs, and nearly as wide as it was long.

"In a few hours, the men were peddling the meat from house to house. They had a washtub full of eggs. How would you like to gather the eggs each evening, if each hen laid a tub of eggs?

“My servant, Juana, bought some of the eggs; but they did not look very good to eat, for the whites remained clear and soft, no matter how long they were cooked. How many strange animals there are in this great world of ours!”



The Big Iguana

“There is the iguana,” said grandmother, as Lucita turned another page of the animal book. “Did you ever hear of them?”

“Grandmother, before you begin to tell us about that,” said Bernice earnestly, “won’t you please tell us how the little baby turtles are cared for when they are hatched by the warmth of the sun? If one mother turtle lays a tub of eggs, she would have a big family of babies to care for, wouldn’t she?”

“Yes, indeed, if she cared for them; but she doesn’t,” grandmother explained. “They are left to shift for themselves. The men say that you can see a baby turtle digging its way out of the sand. Away it goes for the water. That is their nature.”

“Will you tell us about that other queer animal now?” questioned Earl. “I cannot remember the name.”

“The iguana? It is not a handsome creature. Indeed, I think it very ugly. It is a great lizard, and grows to be five feet long or more. We used to go to town on the river. The banks were covered with ferns, vines, and flowers; but wherever there was a high, bare

bank or cliff, we could see the homes of the iguanas. They like to sun themselves; and as our boat slipped noiselessly through the water, we could see the huge iguanas stretched out in the openings of their caves, basking in



The Iguana

the sun. If they heard us, they would rise on their front feet as high as they could, but keep the rest of their bodies very close to the ground; and then they would watch us closely with their beady eyes. As long as we were in sight, they would continue to look.

"The head of the iguana is covered with scaly plates; and there is a crest of long, slender scales along the back. The crest is high at the head, and gradually grows shorter toward the tail. I have read that the iguanas have another peculiarity of the lizard. That is, if you catch one by its tail, you are likely to see the iguana hurrying away without the tail, which you still hold in your hand."

"Ugh! Were you not afraid of them?" asked Lucita.

"No; they are harmless unless wounded. A very queer thing about them is their power to change their color to protect themselves. In some countries, they live in trees, and are green, like the leaves. It is said that when afraid or angry, they change their color instantly into a dark brown or even black. The Mexican iguanas live on the ground, so they are a brownish color, and it is hard to tell them from the ground on which they lie. They are quite clumsy, though, and are easily caught in traps or a noose."

"Why do people want to catch them, grandmother?" questioned Earl.

"The people eat them, and regard them as a great treat. I knew a woman who ate what

she thought was a chicken pie, at a hotel; and when she praised the dish, she was told that the meat she had eaten was iguana.

“I have never heard of the iguanas’ doing any harm to crops. They live on grasses and herbs.”

“My! Won’t we have some interesting things to tell our friends in the United States —if we ever go back!” exclaimed Bernice.



Burden-Bearers

How Mrs. Parrot Said "No"

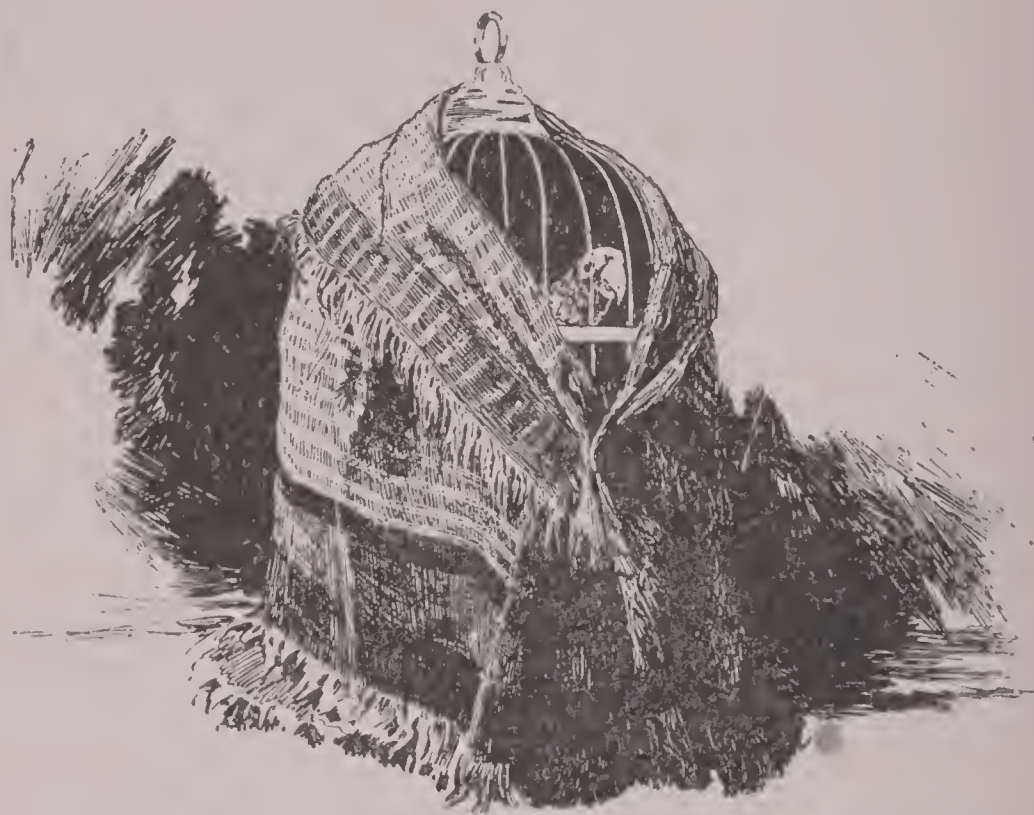
"Do we really have to leave Mexico, mother?" questioned Earl anxiously.

"Yes, I fear so, my son. Sister is in very poor health, and the doctors believe that a change of climate will do her good."

"I have so much that I care for here!" said Earl sorrowfully. "I know I must leave my burro and the goat, but perhaps I can get—oh, I know!" he exclaimed earnestly. "I found a parrot's nest yesterday! Maybe we can get a baby bird to tame and take back to the States with us. If we leave to-morrow, this may be the last pet that I can find to take with me; and you know I promised Hal that I'd bring him a pet from Mexico."

Mother smiled as she thought of the great collection of pets he had captured that summer to take "to the States" with him—squirrels, bats, turtles, armadillos, a chameleon, and odd birds and butterflies. But they had either escaped or had not lived after they were caught, and there was not a single pet ready to take back. And now they were planning to begin their return trip the next day, so Earl had but a short time to find a

pet. Mother, sister, and grandmother, put on their big Mexican sombreros, and followed the eager boy to the pasture down by the river.



The way Earl expected to carry a parrot back to the States with him.

“There goes the mother parrot now,” called brother, pointing to a bird circling over our heads. “If there are only eggs in the nest, of course I won’t touch them, and she will never know the difference. Do you see that tall coconut palm tree? Now look up the trunk and you will see an opening. That is

where the nest is, for I saw Madam Parrot fly out of that hole."

"Yes, I see it," said mother; "but how can you ever get up to the nest? The trunk of the coconut tree is perfectly smooth, and that opening is at least fifteen feet from the ground."

"May I try to climb the way the natives do? They tie a rope loosely around the tree and themselves, and then walk up the tree, leaning against the rope."

"I have seen them do it," returned mother; "but American boys are not trained to do such climbing from their babyhood, as the Mexicans are. The Mexicans use their feet and toes almost like hooks. I remember that long ago, we came in on a small boat, and landed on the island where the lighthouse is. We were all very hungry, but the old lighthouse keeper said he had nothing to offer us except nuts. He waved his hand toward the coconut grove that covers the tiny island, and said to help ourselves. The men in our crowd walked about, wondering how we could get the coconuts. A few tried to get some down by throwing sticks, but they failed to reach halfway. Finally the little grandson of the

old lighthouse keeper came out and offered to get some nuts for us. He was no larger than you, Earl; but how he did scramble up that tree! We had to run for shelter then, for the coconuts began to tumble down when he reached the top of the tree.”

Brother was disappointed that mother was afraid to let him climb as the little boy had done. Then he spied a long bamboo pole. “Oh, mother, here’s a ladder—a real Mexican ladder!” he called.

All helped to place the pole against the trunk of the coconut tree, and then to hold it as firmly as the three of them could, while brother climbed up on it by easy steps, at the same time telling them what he was going to do with his parrot.

When he reached the top of the ladder, with a glance of triumph downward into the faces below him, he put his hand into the opening. Out popped Mrs. Parrot’s bright head and sharp beak.

Brother’s eyes grew big, and he quickly backed down the ladder. Any one acquainted with the sharp, crooked beak of a parrot, will know why he did not take a baby parrot home with him.

Keepsakes

When the Mexicans heard that their beloved friends, Mother Wesley and her three children, were about to leave for their *tierra*, they flocked in to bid them farewell and to wish them a pleasant journey.

The poorer class brought them presents as tokens of their friendship,—little pottery jugs and dishes, gayly painted; and baskets fashioned of finely split bamboo interwoven with bright worsted yarn, which were made by the prisoners in the jail at Tampico.

One woman brought them a pair of tiny toy monkeys. Of what do you think they were made? They were carved from olive seeds by a prisoner at Vera Cruz, with no other tool than a sharpened nail. Tiny specks of black wax served as eyes, and the little monkeys were very natural and curious.

A boy brought Earl a polished armadillo shell, and a fisherman brought mother the sword of a sawfish. “You were kind to my little Natalie,” the man said, “and her heart is sad because you are leaving. I want you to remember us when you see the sword.”



The Mexican Hat and Basket Peddler

Mother thanked him, and told him that she would never forget her friends in Mexico. Her heart was sad, too, in having to leave.

"I am glad to take this particular sword home with me," she explained to the fisherman. "I fear that my friends in the United States might not believe my fish story if I did not have the sword as proof. You remember the story of it, don't you?" she said, turning to the children.

"Oh, tell us! Tell us!" they chorused in a breath.

"Well, once as grandma and I were crossing the broad, deep Tuxpam River in a rowboat," she said, "our oarsman told us to sit very still, for the river was rough. Suddenly there was a splash. A huge, dark form hurled itself through the air, and struck at my side with a thump, then fell back into the water. I had but a glimpse of the terrible-looking sword.



Bringing a present as token of her friendship.

“When we reached the shore, we found that the dent in the boat where the fish had struck was but one inch from the top of the



The Sawfish

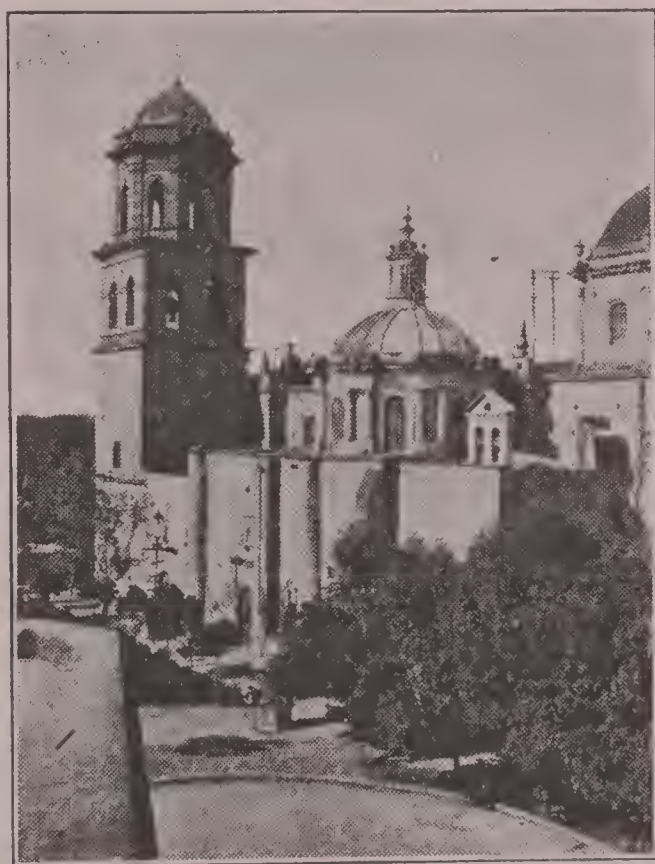
boat, directly at my side. Evidently the fish had aimed his sword at me.

“Soon after, this same sawfish was caught, though it made a brave fight. We were sure that it was the same one, for it had broken off two teeth where it struck the canoe. See how ugly it is,” she said, holding up the long,

bony projection. It was broad at the base, but only about an inch wide at the point.

"Let's see how long it is," mother proposed. "Why, it's three and one half feet long! Feel how strong and sharp the big, bony teeth on each side are. It surely would have killed me if it had struck as it intended.

"This gift that the fisherman has brought me is a sign of the care of a loving heavenly Father," mother concluded gratefully.



San Francisco Church, Guadalajara, Mexico

What Mother Left Her Friends

The dear Mexican friends were not the only ones who wished to give something. The many keepsakes they brought were signs of loving hearts; and Mother Wesley had a loving heart, too. She longed to leave her friends something that would remind them of her. She wanted it to be a real help to them; and as she thought it over, a plan flashed into her head.

“I want to give some little token to Doña Ermenia’s girls, they have been so kind to us. I wonder if they would like one of the little Gospels,” she asked grandmother.

“I am sure they would,” replied the latter. “You know how they seemed to treasure the Bible we persuaded them to buy.”

So mother wrote in Spanish on the flyleaf of the Gospel of St. John: “To my friend Carmen Dominguez. ‘Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.’ Eccl. 12:1. ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life.’ ‘If ye love Me, keep My commandments.’ John 14:6, 15. May you ever love this, the word of God.”

When she took them the books, they thanked mother again and again: "*Mil gracias, señora,*" they said. "We shall always remember you when we look at your parting gift."

"I should be pleased to think you remember me," answered mother. "But I wish you to read these little Gospels carefully, and you will learn to love the words of truth and righteousness they contain."

"Señora, would you kindly write in my little blank book the words of a song my brother heard at your house last evening?" asked one of the girls. "He said that perhaps you were having meeting, because the songs were about Jesus."

Mother was very glad to write for her the words of "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," in Spanish. So mother left in the hearts of her Mexican friends the seeds of truth.





A Little Mexican Indian Girl

On the Way

Mother, Bernice, Earl, and Lucita, all at last were off for Tampico in a farm wagon owned by an American neighbor.

They soon reached Tampico Alto, where they paused to look down over the blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico. They could see the steamers passing the lighthouse and entering the Panuco River, and others approaching the city of Tampico. Nearer to them, parts of the road lined with natives, some on horseback or burros, others in creaking oxcarts, most of them on foot, all formed a part of the picture.

"I wonder what those burros are loaded with!" exclaimed Lucita, as they neared a number of these patient little beasts heavily laden with what appeared to be roots and *tevigó*.

The driver answered: "Why, that is sarsaparilla. It grows very plentifully here. It is shipped to the United States to be made into medicine."

These were followed by long trains of burros loaded with corn, and driven by Indians, whose dress consisted of white, loose trousers



A Mexican Soldier

and shirts. Each Indian carried over one shoulder his constant companion, a blanket, which usually has a slit in the center to put the head through, leaving half the blanket in front, and half behind.

“How erect those women walk with those heavy water jugs on their heads!” remarked Bernice. “They don’t pay any attention at all to those big jars, filled to the brim, but walk briskly along, and laugh and talk as much as though they carried nothing. And see—in addition to the water, one is carrying a fat little brown baby. See the baby smile as we say ‘*Adios*,’ she whispered.”

“Well, did you ever see such a curious manner of moving?” questioned mother, as she nodded to a family coming toward them.

The Mexican mother led the way, with a large bundle of clothing on her head, a baby on one arm, and a basket of pottery ware on the other, while a little toddler clung to her skirts. A little girl, laden with a red blanket and a straw mat (in all probability their bed), was driving a grunting pig. A small boy was leading a goat, the kid bleating along behind. Upon the boy’s head were three wide-rimmed, pointed hats, regular Mexican sombreros.

“Why does that boy wear more than one sombrero?” cried Earl. “This one is all I can hold my head up straight under,” touching the new sombrero upon his head.

“These poor people have no bandboxes or trunks to carry their hats in, so they think it



A Native Carrying Wood

is the safest plan to put them on their heads, even if they do make a top-heavy load," explained mother.

"This lad has his old hat below, and above that his new one, and on top is a much larger one," she added.

"I suppose that belongs to his father," suggested Earl. "There he comes now. What do you suppose he has on his back?"

"Why, that is a sewing machine, securely fastened and held in place by a leather band across his forehead," answered mother.

"Oh, I wish we were going the same way as they!" cried sympathetic Earl, "and then we could help them with their heavy loads."

"They need our help in more ways than one," responded mother. "No doubt if you were to ask them, you would find several little images in their possession, and various medals that they believe are blessed, and therefore holy."

"If we could only teach them to look to Jesus as Saviour!" exclaimed Bernice.

"Of course, only the poor and ignorant worship images," ventured Earl again.

But his mother replied: "Do you remember my visit to the wealthy Señora Perez? She

asked me to go into the sick-room of her little Gracia one day. There upon the foot of the bed was a small cradle, containing a doll, perhaps eighteen inches long, richly dressed. They call this the Christ-child, and have great faith in its power to heal.

"The señora reverently took in her hand a gold locket that hung on Gracia's neck. Opening it, she showed me what appeared to be a few ravelings. 'These,' she explained, 'are a few threads from St. Peter's robe. They were sent to me directly from Rome,' and she pressed the locket to her lips, and bade the child do the same.

"In that beautiful home, I saw a candle kept burning before an image. They had a large library, but not one copy of God's word was there. The señora was interested in my Bible, and said that the pope had given permission to read it, but that she did not possess one, because the priests did not approve of the reading of the Bible by the people in their homes, and she did not wish to offend them."

"The idea! I would show them that they could not keep me from having a Bible of my own," cried Earl.

“Children, have we not cause to praise our heavenly Father that we are allowed to have His holy book, and can enjoy its counsel and follow its precepts? We should study much, and have the precious promises hidden in our hearts; for we may not always have the Bible to study.”



By the Roadside

Cochineal

At mother's request, the driver stopped the team near a grove of wild lemons, and the children filled a basket with the juicy, yellow fruit.

"Children," called mother, "do come and look at this cactus! Do you see anything unusual?"

"Not at all. It is just a common, prickly cactus fence, such as we see on all sides in Mexico," responded Earl.

"Look closely at this leaf," said mother. "Do you not see those tiny, whitish specks?"

"Oh, yes! They look like scale of some sort," said Bernice disgustedly.

"I do not suppose you would draw any comparison between Lucita's red dress and these little specks, would you?" asked mother.

The children looked blank for a moment. Suddenly Earl's face brightened. "Oh, now I know, mother! It is the insect used for coloring. You call it coch— coch—"

"Cochineal," suggested mother. "Yes, these are the cochineal insects employed in dyeing scarlet and crimson. Cochineal is made of the bodies of these tiny insects.

“The cochineal is a very small creature. A pound of the dried insects is calculated to contain seventy thousand. The male is a deep red color, and has white wings. The female has no wings, and is a dark brown color, covered with a white powder.”

“I should not like the task of gathering them. Do you know how they do it, mother?” asked Lucita.

“Yes; the gathering is very tedious. They are killed by boiling water or by heating in ovens. The natives then brush the insects off the branches with the tail of a squirrel.”

“Very few would want to spend their time gathering bugs,” said Bernice.

“It certainly would not be an idle employment, for I read that the cochineal is one of the most important exports of Mexico. But we must be off, or we shall be late in reaching Tampico.”



Cochineal
Cactus

Ready for the Train

Before long, they reached the crest of the last hill. Spread out before them was another beautiful sight. Down below, nestling at the foot of the hill, on the banks of the lake, was the town of Pueblo Viejo. This is said to be one of the first settlements in Mexico. Across the lake to the north was the city of Tampico, situated on the banks of the broad Panuco River.

Down through the streets of Pueblo Viejo, they rattled over the cobblestones. Apparently the whole village came out to see the strangers; for the cry was heard on all sides, "*Ahí van los Americanos.*"

When the Wesleys drew up at the boat landing, they were immediately besieged by a crowd of boatmen, each telling in loud tones the merits of his own boat. There were steam launches, rowboats, sailboats, and cedar canoes. The children, however, were partial to the latter; so, after much talking, they finally chose a broad, comfortable canoe, and before long were all safely seated and on their way. The passage across the lake and river took about two hours.

Arriving in Tampico, they went to the house of a friend, and prepared to leave early the next morning. First they visited the market for the fruit to take on their way. The market was an immense house divided up into numerous stalls, in which every sort of eatable, as well as baskets, hats, and pottery ware, were for sale.

“Oh, we must have mangoes,” cried Earl. “I don’t suppose I shall ever see any again, and they are so delicious!”

“Yes, and pineapples and sapotes,” added Bernice, “and bananas and oranges, and—”

“Stay!” said mother. “I can only fill this basket; while if we carried away all we cared for of these delicious tropical fruits, I should have to charter a car.”



Market Day

Homeward Bound

The hearts of our missionary family were filled with sadness as the train bore them swiftly away from Tampico. Past the long wharves, where lay boats flying the flags of nearly every nation, they sped.

“Good-by to our missionary work on the boats!” Earl said.

“There is the Sinaloa!” shouted Bernice excitedly. “How often we have been on board with our papers and tracts, and how interested some of them became in the study of the Bible! We sold them several, too, and they always welcomed us gladly. How they would rush to the side of the steamer when they saw us coming! We could hear them telling each other that *la americana*, the Bible-woman, was coming again.”

Several boats were steaming up the river. “Oh, there is the St. Thomas!” said mother, pointing out the window. “Do you remember, children, when we went on board the last time? It is a Danish ship, and the sailors were so pleased to receive the literature in their own tongue!

“And do you remember the young-looking sailor who told us of his home, and that he hoped to return to see his mother soon, after being away three years? He said that his mother loved the Lord, and had given him a Bible when he left home, and he had carried it with him in all his travels.”

“Oh, yes!” said Bernice. “You asked him if he read it often, and he said that he didn’t read it as often as he should, but that he would read it oftener since you asked him to do so.”

“Yes, children,” mother assented, “we know that the Lord has blessed the work done in His name among the seafaring people. We shall pray that He will touch the hearts of some consecrated Christians to come to Tampico and help grandfather and grandmother continue the work here, now that we must leave them to hold the fort alone.”

Reaching Monterey, the little family found that they had to stay over two days; so they were glad to accept the invitation of a friend to visit the famous Topo Chico Hot Springs.

They took the street car, drawn by three mules, at the plaza, and were soon hurrying through the city, out into the country, past



Getting Milk from the Papaya

beautiful modern cottages and green fields of corn. The way led to the foot of a towering mountain. There, near a cool, pleasant park, they found the springs.

There were many small bathrooms and a large swimming-tank for those who wished to bathe. "The water from these springs is considered very healthful, and a great many bottles are shipped away," explained the owner.

On the journey back, the little mules became balky and refused to travel. The driver and the conductor did not seem to think it a matter worthy of much consideration; for after a few attempts to start the balky mules, they seated themselves comfortably, and, lighting their cigarettes, entered into a lively conversation. Mother and the children walked on, picking wild flowers, and enjoying the scenery, until overtaken by the belated car.

The United States at Last

Finally the travelers arrived at Laredo, on the Rio Grande, where they passed through the customhouse and had their baggage inspected.

“Good-by to Mexico, ‘the Land of Mañana,’” said Lucita, taking a long breath.

“We are really on our own native soil once more,” exclaimed Bernice; “but things look the same here as in Mexico.”

“Yes,” laughed mother; “we are not far enough north to notice much change. I trust that here in the United States we shall notice this one difference—that the United States is the land of to-day, and we have left behind us ‘the Land of Mañana.’”



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